

A VALUABLE WEED.

The Tensel That Is Used to Raise the Nap on Cloth.

Our readers who never saw a tensel (spelled also tassel and tasse) and even tensel) call it a fringed or "swamp cat" and get all over with little stiff hooks. It is the bur (or tasse) or flower head (or thistle) top of the plant dipscus, and so identified it with its botanical name, Dipscus fulvum, or fuller's tassel.

However familiar to people who live in lands where the tensel is extensively grown the fact may be that the prickly heads of that plant are universally used to raise the nap on cloth, a multitude of persons in his country probably never heard of it and will be astonished to learn in what enormous quantities the plant is raised.

In France alone several thousand acres of land are exclusively devoted to the cultivation of the tensel. French manufacturers use many thousand dollars' worth of the prickly heads and export thousands of tons of them, valued at perhaps millions of dollars. Hundreds of tons are produced in Austria, England, Belgium, Poland and the Crimea.

The prickles of the tensel have a small knob at the end, and this, mounted on an elastic stem and set with great precision on the central spindle, affords a little brush, such, it is said, as the finest mechanical skill has never been able to rival, at all events at the same price.—New York Herald.

A LOST MINE.

The Tragic Legend That Is Associated With Bald Mountain.

The legend of a lost mine has given to Bald Mountain, in Placer county, Colo., a fascinating interest for prospectors. Tradition is that early in the fifties of the last century three men disappeared from an immigrant party going over the old Gap trail. Search for them was without avail, and they were finally reported dead by the searchers.

Where or how they wintered no one knows, but the following spring, ragged, shoeless and demoralized, they filed into Michigan Bluff. Their blankets were covered with blood, and with them they brought gold dust to the amount of \$10,000 or \$15,000.

Spending but a single night within the confines of civilization and giving no information as to the location of their large claim, they were followed on their return trip, and a few weeks later their murdered bodies were found in one of the dreary canyons that near the face of the desolate peak.

Since then many a man has sought this lost mine, but apparently its immensity is as certain as that of the treasure of Captain Kidd.—Philadelphia North American.

Pensive Butlers.

The fashion of building houses with the entrance doors practically on a level with the street gives the observing stroller on Fifth avenue some humorous glimpses of butlers on duty. In the house of one of the most fashionable families in town the butler can be seen standing behind the bronze grill and glass doors staring disconsolately out at the passing throng for most of the afternoon, while across the street from this house the same kind of an entranceway often discloses a glimpse of a functionary of the same class seated in a postural attitude by a circular marble table, his head supported by his hand. Outside of a hospital they are probably the saddest looking men in New York.—New York Press.

The Gordian Knot.

When one of Uncle Sam's sailors, a man named Gordon, formerly serving on one of our vessels in a West Indian squadron, was taken to the Naval hospital in Washington he described with gruesome vividness to his companions there his adventure with a shark off one of the islands in the West Indies. "I had just fell over the bulwarks," said the able seaman, "when along comes a big shark and grabs me by the leg."

"What did ye do then, matey?" asked one of the patients.

"I never disputes none with sharks," said the sailor. "I let him have the leg."—Harper's Weekly.

A Composer's Compliment.

Wagner once said he would prefer to go to Vienna to hear the waltzes of Strauss to hearing Italian opera. On a birthday of Mrs. Strauss some years ago she had as guests many celebrated musicians. She passed around a fan on which the different composers and players were writing their names and excerpts from compositions of their own. When it reached Brahms he penned the first measure of the "Blue Danube" waltz and signed beneath, "No, I regret to say, by your devoted friend Johannes Brahms."

An Opinion.

"Say, paw," said little Rollo, "why do they call George Washington the father of his country?"

"I dunno, son, unless it was because his country kept him hanging to keep it out of trouble and then came to look at him as a sort of old foggy whose advice didn't amount to much anyhow."—Washington Star.

What He Wanted.

"Be careful, young man. You know the old saying, 'Marry in haste and repent at leisure.'"

"That's why I'm rushing things. What I want is leisure."—Exchange.

When fortune falls us the supposed friends of our prosperous days vanish.—Fliegman.

In the course of life how many persons stop on their way and fall because, like Atalanta, they let the gold apples seduce them.—Honore de Balzac.

Proof.

"I guess their honeymoon is about over."

"What makes you think so?"

"He's quit coming home for his noon lunch."—Detroit Free Press.

Real without knowledge is like expectation to a man in the dark.—Newman.

No Time For Retreat.

In an Irish garrison town a theatrical company was giving performances, and some soldiers from the local barracks were engaged to act as superns. Their duties included the waging of a fierce fight in which, after a stirring struggle, one army was defeated on a given signal from the prompter. For a few nights all went well, but on the Friday evening a special performance of the piece was to be given under the patronage of the colonel, and other officers of the garrison. The two armies met as usual at the end of the second act, when they fought and fought and kept on fighting, regardless of the agonized glare in the eye of their (actor) general, who hoarsely ordered the proper array to "Retreat, confound you." But the light still went on, and soon the horrified manager saw the wrong army being driven slowly off the stage, still fighting desperately. Down came the curtain amid roars of laughter, and the fuming manager hastened to ask the delinquents why they had failed to retreat on hearing the signal.

"Retraite," roared a burly fustler whose visage had been badly battered, "and is it retraite ye'd have us, wid the colonel and all the officers in the boxes?"—London Scraps.

Dickens' Characters.

Dickens bestowed many of his fictitious names on real flesh and blood persons, says an admirer of the famous novelist. Indeed he and David Copperfield were not far apart, so far as salient features were concerned. Tracy Tupman was the happy counterpart of a man named Winters, who at the present day would be pounded or arrested for what is known in slang as "mashing." Paul Dombey was an invalid nephew of the author, his right name being Harry Burnett. Dora Copperfield was a Miss Bendwell, with whom Dickens was in love at the early age of eighteen. Mrs. Bardell, who gave Pickwick the worst time in his life, was a scheming boarding house widow named Ann Ellis. Tommy Traddles was Colonel Frohm Talford, formerly superintendent of Indian affairs in Canada. Miss Mowcher was a Miss Wilkes, Mrs. Skewton a Mrs. Campbell; the abominable Squeers was William Shaw; the lovely Cherrybelle brothers were cotton spinners and merchants of Manchester; the fat boy was a true life character, and so was Captain Cuttle, one of the most attractive of all.

Didn't Impress Him.

Shortly after his rise to the bench Judge Coleman had occasion to pronounce a life sentence upon a notorious offender. In the course of his remarks the judge spoke with so much feeling and eloquence that many of the listeners were deeply affected. The prisoner, on the other hand, seemed to be quite indifferent, looking at the ceiling and apparently giving no attention whatever to what was being said. After he had been remanded to jail one of the young lawyers had gone into the cell, curious to know how the criminal had felt when his honor was passing sentence upon him.

"What do you mean?" asked the convicted one.

"I mean when the judge was telling you you must go to prison for life."

"You mean when he was talking to me?"

"Yes."

"Oh, I never paid no attention to Dick Coleman. He ain't no public speaker nobow!"—Argonaut.

The Fate of the Fancy Set.

James, aged seven, had been promoted. In recognition of this great event his father purchased for him the following things that James insisted were necessary:

A box of one dozen pencils, assorted leads; one ink and one pencil eraser, one pencil box with a marvelous roll top, three copybooks for home work, two penholders and a patent strap that was a marvel of ingenuity, but somehow or other didn't seem to hold the books very firmly.

The father examined the outfit a few days after and found that it contained:

One much chewed lead pencil furnished by the city, a scribbling pad with a few sheets on it, a tin fountain pen that did not work and never could have worked and a skate strap to hold the things together.

The father asked no questions. He instinctively knew what had become of the fancy implements of education.—New York Press.

Her Answer.

An Atchison girl and a proposal of marriage and asked a week to think it over. She went to all of her married sisters. One, who used to be a belle, had three children, did all her own work and hadn't been to the theater or out riding since she was married. Another, whose husband was a promising young man at the time she was married, was supporting him. A third didn't dare say her life was her own when her husband was around, and a fourth was divorced. After visiting them and hearing their woes the heroine of this little tale went home, got pen, ink and paper and wrote an answer to the young man. You may think it was refusing him, but it wasn't. She said she could be ready in a month.—Atchison Globe.

Faith, Hope and Charity.

A London weekly offered 2 guineas for a definition of faith, hope and charity. The winner is as follows: Faith, blind trust in a first page; hope, what investors are fed upon; charity, what some of them are likely to be brought to.

That is certainly not bad, but this one is perhaps even better: Faith, the gift that saves mankind; hope, the gift that cheers mankind; charity, the gift that makes man kind.

The Dear Friends.

"Fred didn't blow his brains out because you flitted him the other night," said girl friend No. 1. "He came over and proposed to me."

"Did he?" replied girl friend No. 2. "Then he must have got rid of them in some other way."

Hindsight.

"I made enough money in Wall street last week to buy a house and lot."

"Did you buy it?"

"Well, no; but I wish I had."—New York Herald.

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